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# **E U R A**

**Office of European Analysis  
Directorate of Intelligence**

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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

10 September 1985

**WEST EUROPEAN EXPECTATIONS FOR THE US-SOVIET SUMMIT****Summary**

West European governments do not expect the meeting between President Reagan and Soviet leader Gorbachev to provide quick solutions to long-standing East-West problems. They hope, however, that it will start a dialogue that over time will ease the atmosphere of confrontation between the superpowers, facilitate agreements in the Geneva arms control negotiations, reduce tensions in Central America and the Middle East, and improve East-West economic relations. [redacted]

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A summit ending on promises for greater cooperation would give a boost to West European governments such as the British and West German that have strongly supported NATO policies, and would help defuse leftist parties' arguments for unilateral concessions. If, on the other hand, the summit produces no agreements or ends with mutual recriminations, anti-nuclear groups and leftist parties almost certainly would blame the United States, and even conservative governments would likely demand that Washington show greater flexibility toward the Soviet Union to get detente on the road again. [redacted]

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This memorandum was prepared by the Office of European Analysis for Ambassador Matlock of the National Security Council. Questions and comments may be directed to [redacted] Chief, European Issues Division, [redacted]

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The governments of the "Big Four" countries, in particular, want to play an active role in the search for improved East-West relations. They want to influence the pre-summit debate in Washington and Moscow to strengthen moderate forces there and to demonstrate their influence in international policymaking forums to their electorates. The leaders of the major West European countries probably will propose, in particular, that the superpowers agree to a ban on chemical weapons and nuclear testing. [ ]

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### Positions on Key Issues

Although West European leaders remain skeptical of Moscow's arms control intentions despite recent announcements of moratoriums on ASAT and nuclear testing, they have some hope that Gorbachev's desire to concentrate on domestic reform will prompt him to make concessions in INF and START if Washington compromises on SDI. If Gorbachev were to offer substantial cuts in the USSR's offensive nuclear arsenals, even the West German and British governments, which have strongly supported SDI research, might ask Washington to make development and deployment of SDI negotiable. France, which has opposed SDI and is promoting instead its EUREKA European research initiative, wants the United States to make all phases of the missile defense plan, including research, subject to negotiation. The smaller West European countries, which have little technological stake in SDI, generally share that view. In our judgment, though, even the prospects of superpower movement on arms control would not lessen British and French resistance to inclusion of their own nuclear forces in any US-Soviet agreement. [ ]

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The West Europeans' wish list for the summit concentrates primarily on East-West security issues, but it also extends to areas such as the Middle East, Central America, and improved East-West economic relations:

- In the Middle East, West European governments want Washington to give stronger backing to the Hussein-Arafat peace initiative and Moscow to encourage the Palestinians to cooperate.
- On Central America, West Europeans want Washington to adopt a more conciliatory policy toward Nicaragua and Moscow to refrain from providing weapons and logistical support to leftist guerrilla movements through its proxy Cuba.
- The West Europeans also hope for a relaxation of East-West tensions that would lead to expanded trade with the East. With EC unemployment at double-digit levels, West Europeans welcome any new markets to help remedy economic problems at home. [ ]

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West Germany

Chancellor Kohl has pressed for a US-Soviet summit. He now wants to visit Washington for consultations before the summit, during which he probably would suggest that the US propose to Moscow another treaty on the elimination of chemical weapons. West Germany is the only NATO country with US chemical weapons stationed on its soil, and Kohl is concerned that recent discussions on the possibility of their replacement with new binary munitions will provide new fuel for the peace movement and the opposition.

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United Kingdom

Prime Minister Thatcher also considers herself an East-West broker. In addition to meeting with Gorbachev in London last December, she has visited a number of East European countries over the past 18 months in an effort to reduce East-West tensions. She already has claimed publicly to be a prime mover behind the summit, and she may hope the President will visit London before or soon after the Geneva meeting to reaffirm Britain's "special relationship" with the United States. Thatcher would like SDI deployment to be used in negotiations to obtain reductions in Soviet offensive weapons, but she is opposed to any arms control formula that would set back Britain's nuclear modernization plans. Thatcher, like Kohl, is likely to encourage the President to propose a treaty on chemical weapons to Gorbachev.

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France

President Mitterrand is skeptical that the summit will bring about significant Soviet concessions on issues important to Paris, such as SS-20 deployments and the role of French nuclear forces in superpower arms talks. The French favor a ban on both ASAT and SDI deployment and would welcome limitations on SDI research. Mitterrand may be tempted, in fact, to make a joint statement with Gorbachev at their meeting in October about the desirability of limiting space weapons.

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Paris is likely to be satisfied if the meeting produces an improvement in atmospherics that makes future progress possible. In fact, Mitterrand would almost certainly prefer a drawn-out dialogue in which France could participate; privately, at least, he would not welcome immediate dramatic bilateral results that would effectively shut France out of the action.

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### Italy

Prime Minister Craxi would welcome a joint moratorium on new intermediate-range missile deployments at the summit, but he would be less enthusiastic about a decision to dismantle existing missiles because he probably believes the INF missile base at Comiso gives him useful leverage with Washington. We think that Craxi favors a ban on ASAT testing, but he probably would oppose an agreement limiting SDI research because of its assumed economic benefits for Italy. Craxi's positions on arms control issues, however, are often unpredictable because he is not well versed on their more technical aspects and is especially prone to view East-West relations through a domestic political prism. In order not to be outflanked on detente questions by his centrist allies or the Communist opposition, Craxi has occasionally run ahead of other NATO partners.

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### Canada

A US-Soviet agreement on space weapons at the summit would be of substantial benefit to Prime Minister Mulroney in helping to sell closer relations with the United States to the Canadian public. Ottawa is about to enter negotiations with Washington on the renewal of the North American Air Defense Agreement (NORAD), and the political opposition is trying to use its renewal as evidence that Canada will be linked to the US Strategic Defense Initiative. For that reason, an agreement on space weapons would greatly ease the path toward NORAD renewal, and would permit Ottawa to move in the direction of closer overall defense relations with the United States.

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### Netherlands

Prime Minister Lubbers is hoping the summit will lead to an arms agreement that would make INF deployment in the Netherlands unnecessary. Failing this, he would welcome any evidence of progress on arms control, including chemical weapons, in order to make INF deployment politically more palatable. Lubbers has been publicly advocating limits on development and deployment of SDI and wants both phases to be negotiable in exchange for real reductions in nuclear arsenals including INF.

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### Belgium

Prime Minister Martens hopes that US pre-summit public statements stressing flexibility on arms control will improve his prospects in the 13 October national election. Even more important will be the summit's impact on coalition bargaining among the parties after the election. A summit failure could prevent Martens from securing the support of the anti-INF Flemish

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[redacted]

Volksunie party that he probably will need to form a government. Martens also will be hoping that the summit will reduce technology transfer concerns -- a source of considerable US-Belgian friction over the past year. [redacted]

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### Conclusion

A perceived successful summit would give a political boost to West European governments that have generally supported US policy toward the Soviets, reduce the urgency of making painful decisions on arms programs such as INF and SDI, and set the stage for strengthened economic ties. These governments probably realize that public expectations for significant breakthroughs on arms control are overdrawn. Even the appearance of intensified dialogue between Washington and Moscow, however, would undercut leftist opposition parties' arguments for unilateral arms control concessions. [redacted]

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Conversely, the appearance of summit failure would be a setback for West European governments that have argued that INF and SDI need not prevent a renewal of East-West detente. Leftist opposition parties and peace groups almost certainly would blame Washington for a failed summit. Some leftist media already are suggesting that Washington's recent disclosure of the "chemical dust" affair and announcement of an ASAT test indicate that it is not serious about reducing tensions with the Soviet Union. Even conservative West European governments are likely to call publicly for some unilateral arms control concessions to facilitate a superpower dialogue. In the aftermath of a failed summit, most governments would increase their contacts with Moscow and East European capitals in an effort to avert renewed tensions and to lay the groundwork for another move by the superpowers to come to terms. [redacted]

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